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C O N F I D E N T I A L KUWAIT 000317

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STATE FOR NEA/ARP, NSC FOR RAMCHAND, LONDON FOR TSOU, PARIS
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E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/04/2017
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [KDEM](#) [KU](#) [NATIONAL ASSEMBLY FREEDOM AGENDA](#)
SUBJECT: KUWAIT CABINET RESIGNS UNDER PRESSURE FROM
PARLIAMENT

REF: A. KUWAIT 292
[1](#)B. KUWAIT 258

Classified By: Ambassador Richard LeBaron for reason 1.4 (d)

Sensitive But Unclassified; not for Internet distribution.

[1](#)1. (SBU) Kuwait's Cabinet resigned en masse March 4 on the eve of a scheduled parliamentary vote of no confidence on Health Minister Shaykh Ahmed Abdullah Al-Sabah. The Cabinet, the 23rd since Kuwait gained independence in 1961, lasted only eight months. The Amir will now begin the customary consultation period before appointing a new Prime Minister, which most expect to remain Shaykh Nasser Mohammed Al-Sabah, the Amir's nephew. Once appointed, there is no time limit on the Prime Minister to form a new Cabinet, unless specified by Amiri decree; however, normally this process takes less than two weeks. Parliament will automatically recess until the new Government is formed. In the meantime, the previous Cabinet will serve as the "caretaker Government."

[1](#)2. (C) Comment: The resignations represent a victory for opposition parliamentarians, particularly Islamists, whose questioning of the Health Minister on February 19 precipitated the Government collapse (ref B). They will also likely quiet for now talk of an Amiri dissolution of Parliament. However, an emboldened opposition is equally likely to quickly resume its attacks on government corruption and mismanagement, closing in on red lines known at this point only to the Amir. End comment.

[1](#)3. (U) Proposed press guidance (if asked): The resignation of the Kuwaiti cabinet represents a Kuwaiti constitutional process whereby the Amir is authorized to change or reappoint government ministers.

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LeBaron